

June 14th, 2016 – Current Accessibility and ADA Compliance Efforts

SDOT is involved in a number of initiatives and efforts to provide improved accessibility and inclusion within the public right-of-way. Some of these efforts are ongoing and will continue from one year to the next. Other efforts may be custom designed, involve community outreach, or may be activities above and beyond the typical SDOT obligations.

Ongoing Efforts

- SDOT constructs or improves existing curb ramps within the public right-of-way as a part of several different programs, most notably larger capital projects and street resurfacing projects. Curb ramp work is also included as a part of SDOT's Safe Routes to School Program, the Pedestrian Master Plan improvements, Neighborhood Park and Street Fund Improvements, as well as private development projects and utility work.
- SDOT has a team of engineers that work hard to design and build curb ramps to best serve all pedestrians. This can be very challenging given the topography in Seattle as well as any existing built infrastructure such as utilities, areaways, or other conflicts.
- When larger projects include roadway reconstruction and modifications to channelization, SDOT looks for opportunities to make pedestrians more visible and to shorten street crossings by using curb bulbs or other measures. These efforts can help to make street crossings easier and safer for all pedestrians, particularly those with disabilities.
- Traffic signal improvements occur that include the installation of Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS), which provide important information to pedestrians with visual and/or hearing impairments.
- Many SDOT projects include sidewalk installation or replacement of older sidewalks. These new sidewalks can make use much easier for people with disabilities and those using mobility assistive devices.
- Curb ramps and Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS) may be requested to be installed for pedestrians with disabilities. SDOT is currently working on a backlog of these requests.
- In 2015, SDOT hired an ADA Coordinator to formalize policies and best practices for achieving ADA compliance within the public right-of-way. The SDOT ADA Coordinator assists with training SDOT staff on ADA compliance, provides technical assistance on design requirements, serves as liaison between the public and SDOT staff, and coordinates and participates in community outreach. The ADA Coordinator participates in national ADA-related conferences and has active communications with others in similar roles throughout the region.
- SDOT has an ADA Committee that is comprised of representatives from all SDOT divisions. The Committee meets regularly to discuss and agree upon a united approach on ADA compliance and best practices for providing accessibility as a Department.
- SDOT is in the process of evaluating pedestrian features in the public right-of-way with respect to accessibility. In May of 2016, SDOT completed a citywide evaluation of all known curb ramps, totaling in excess of 28,000 curb ramps. Click on the link to view the procedure used and the final results of the curb ramp assessment in the [technical report](#).
- Currently the City of Seattle is updating the Transition Plan to ensure access to city programs for people with disabilities. With authority over streets and sidewalks, SDOT is updating the

Transition Plan for features within the public right-of-way with priorities for improvements defined in [Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) regulation 28 C.F.R. § 35.150\(d\)\(2\)](#). These efforts in updating this plan will include public involvement and outreach. The updated plan will be available for the public to view upon completion.

- Training occurs both in-house at SDOT via the ADA Coordinator as well as from outside sources to ensure that the staff is aware of current requirements and best practices. Some of the training opportunities that SDOT has participated in include the U.S. Access Board, the National ADA Network, and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Additional Efforts and Initiatives (as of June of 2016)

- SDOT actively searches for opportunities to work with individuals and communities living with disabilities to better understand the needs and abilities of all pedestrians.
- Engineers and designers at SDOT have participated, and will continue to participate in, blindness simulations, and mobility observations of Deaf-blind pedestrians to better understand the needs of pedestrians with visual and/or hearing impairments. SDOT has worked with professional mobility instructors to discuss possible new treatments in the public right-of-way that could assist pedestrians with visual and/or hearing impairments.
- SDOT staff has participated in wheelchair exercises to experience first-hand some of the challenges of rolling over the sidewalks and curb ramps in Seattle. SDOT has a wheelchair available and is used by engineers to test different curb ramp designs after construction to determine and evaluate improvements or adjustments that could be made.
- SDOT is currently working on a citywide map that will help pedestrians with disabilities plan routes according to varying features and conditions of Seattle sidewalks, curb ramps, and street crossings. This map will be available online upon completion.
- Additional efforts in achieving maximum accessibility in Seattle's public right-of-way are frequently posted on the [SDOT Blog](#).